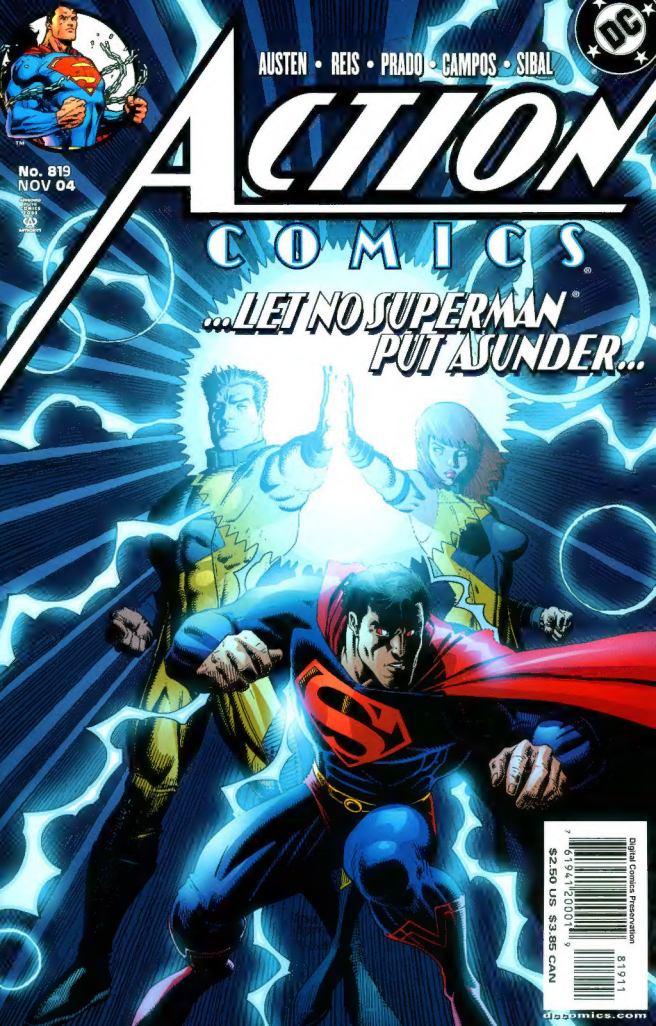
AUSTEN • REIS • PRADO • CAMPOS • SIBAL
No. 819
NOV 04
ACTION
COMICS
...LET NO SUPERMAN PUT ASUNDER...
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SORT OF PUTS EVERYTHING IN *PERSPECTIVE*, DOESN'T IT?
JUST WHEN I THINK THE WORLD IS SO *TERRIBLE* THAT THERE'S NOTHING WORTH *LIVING* OR *FIGHTING* FOR--
HE COMES INTO MY LIFE--
--AND NOW THE WORLD HAS TO BE A BETTER PLACE.
FOR HIM.
I WATCH HIM SLEEP--
--*CONSTANTLY* CHECKING HIS BREATHING BECAUSE I'M AFRAID GOD MIGHT DECIDE I DON'T DESERVE HIM AND TAKE HIM AWAY --
-- AND I WONDER IF THE LITTLE GUY KNOWS HOW MUCH *HE'S* GIVEN ME.
HOW MUCH I LOVE HIM.
MAKES *ME* FEEL PETTY FOR EVEN BEING *UPSET* ABOUT MY LIFE LATELY. MY DEMOTION -- JACK RYDER -- ALL THE REST.
CLARKIE'S STUFF
DON'T BEAT YOURSELF UP ABOUT IT, CLARK. THERE'S NOTHING *WRONG* WITH HOW YOU FEEL.
YOU'RE JUST EXPERIENCING WHAT *EVERYONE* DOES FROM TIME TO TIME. SETBACKS -- PROBLEMS.
LIFE.
IT ONLY SEEMS WORSE THAN IT IS BECAUSE YOU'RE JUST NOT USED TO EXPERIENCING FAILURE.
YOU ARE *SUPERMAN*, AFTER ALL.
CLARK?

CLARK!?

CLARK!?
CLARK, ARE YOU--?!
SNNNRR--
SNNNRR--
I WATCH HIM SLEEP--
--CONSTANTLY CHECKING HIS BREATHING BECAUSE I'M AFRAID--
--GOD MIGHT DECIDE I DON'T DESERVE HIM--
--AND TAKE HIM AWAY--

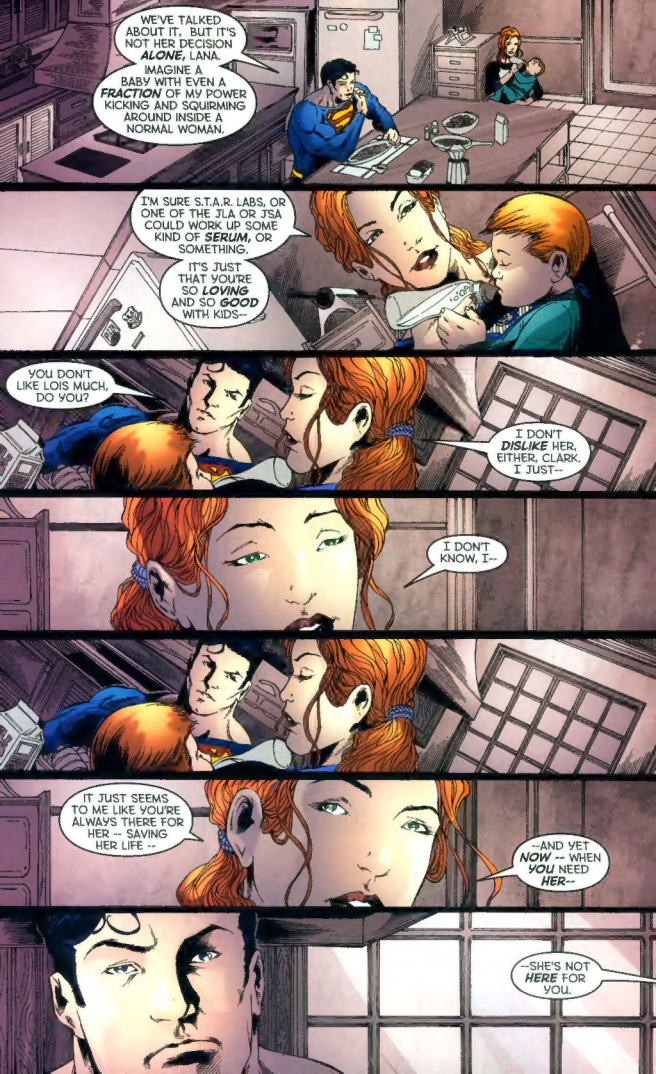
SODOM and GOMORRAH
KOM!
CHUCK AUSTEN
writer
IVAN REIS & JOE PRADO
pencillers
MARC CAMPOS & JON SIBAL inkers
GUY MAJOR colors
COMICRAFT letters
TOM PALMER jr.
associate editor
EDDIE BERGANZA
editor
SUPERMAN created by
JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

CHOOM
HEY!
SPEESH
WHAT A RUSH! DID YOU FEEL THAT?
WHEN OUR POWERS TURNED THOSE PEOPLE TO SALT?
OF COURSE, DARLING, HOW COULD I NOT?
THE SENSATION OF THESE POWERS ALONE IS CERTAINLY GRATIFYING AND INTENSE--
--BUT ADD TO THAT THE THRILL OF USING THEM TO DO WHAT NO ONE ELSE HAS BEEN ABLE TO DO BEFORE--
--AND KILL SUPERMAN? I KNOW!
HOW INCREDIBLE IS THAT?

LOIS?
UM -- NO, MISTER SLEEPY-HEAD.
LANA, REMEMBER?
I GOT A NEW UNIFORM FOR YOU.
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND. THE OTHER ONE WAS COMPLETELY TRASHED.
BEFORE YOU ASK, I TRIED TO CONTACT LOIS--
--NOT THAT SHE'D WANT TO HEAR MY VOICE--
--BUT SHE'S VERY UNREACHABLE.
HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN OUT?
THREE DAYS. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
BET YOU HAVEN'T SLEPT LIKE THAT SINCE YOUR TRIP TO EARTH IN THAT ROCKET SHIP.
WOW. THREE DAYS.
THAT WEIRD GUY FROM S.T.A.R. TOLD SUPERBOY YOU MIGHT SLEEP A LOT, AND YOUR POWERS WOULD PROBABLY COME AND GO.
IT WAS STRANGE. SOMETIMES YOU'D BE FINE, AND OTHER TIMES YOU'D BE BLEEDING LIKE A STUCK PIG.
SCARY.

UM. LANA? HOW DID I GET UNDRESSED?
WELL, IT CERTAINLY WASN'T *YOU,* MISTER HEAVY BRITCHES.
LORD, YOU WEIGH A *TON,* YOU KNOW THAT?
UM. DON'T YOU, UH --
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S KIND OF *INAPPROPRIATE,* LANA?
I MEAN, I *AM* A MARRIED MAN, AFTER ALL.
OH, DON'T BE SUCH A PRUDE. I'VE SEEN IT ALL *BEFORE,* CLARK KENT, OR DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
OR SHOULD I HAVE LET YOU LIE AROUND IN THAT DIRTY, BLOODY UNIFORM FOR THREE DAYS?
MAYBE GOTTEN THE DOORMAN TO UNDRESS YOU?
LANA...
YOU'RE SO GULLIBLE.
YOUR MOM AND DAD CAME OVER AND HELPED ME CLEAN YOU UP. MA BROUGHT THE FRESH COSTUME. THEY GOT YOU NAKED, OKAY?
FEEL BETTER NOW, POLLY PUREBREAD?
WELL. SORT OF.
I DON'T KNOW THAT THE THOUGHT OF MY *MOM* UNDRESSING ME MAKES ME FEEL MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE, ACTUALLY.
WELL, IT WAS THE ONLY OPTION. AND BESIDES--
-- YOU HONESTLY THINK I TRUST MYSELF WITH YOU ALL BARE BONES AND VULNERABLE?

HNG!
HKK!
HUK!
WHY HASN'T HE -- HRRK--
--BEEN RENDERED AS SALT!
PERHAPS-- GRK-- --ANOTHER TRY!
--REACH, DARLING!
SHAWOOOOM
AAAAH!


WE'VE TALKED ABOUT IT, BUT IT'S NOT HER DECISION ALONE, LANA. IMAGINE A BABY WITH EVEN A FRACTION OF MY POWER KICKING AND SQUIRMING AROUND INSIDE A NORMAL WOMAN.
I'M SURE S.T.A.R. LABS, OR ONE OF THE JLA OR JSA COULD WORK UP SOME KIND OF SERUM, OR SOMETHING.
IT'S JUST THAT YOU'RE SO LOVING AND SO GOOD WITH KIDS--
YOU DON'T LIKE LOIS MUCH, DO YOU?
I DON'T DISLIKE HER, EITHER, CLARK. I JUST--
I DON'T KNOW, I--
IT JUST SEEMS TO ME LIKE YOU'RE ALWAYS THERE FOR HER -- SAVING HER LIFE --
--AND YET NOW -- WHEN YOU NEED HER--
--SHE'S NOT HERE FOR YOU.

HNNGGG!
AAAH!
CLANG
SPANG
AH!
GONG

NO
AAAAAHHH...
NOOOOO!
HAAAAH!
AAAH!

LOIS IS ON ASSIGNMENT IN UMEC. SHE'S TOUGH TO REACH. THAT DOESN'T MEAN SHE DOESN'T *CARE*.
SHE LOVES ME. AND I'VE *ALWAYS* LOVED HER, LANA. SINCE THE FIRST MOMENT I LAID EYES ON HER.
IS THAT *TRUE*, OR WAS IT JUST INFATUATION THAT WENT *FURTHER*?
OF COURSE IT'S *TRUE*. HOW CAN YOU EVEN *ASK* THAT?
BECAUSE *SHE* WAS ALWAYS IN LOVE WITH *SUPERMAN*--
--AND JUST *SETTLED* FOR CLARK KENT FROM SMALLVILLE.
I GREW *UP* WITH CLARK KENT FROM SMALLVILLE AND FELL IN LOVE WITH *HIM*.
I LOVE *HIM* FOR ALL THE WONDERFUL QUALITIES THAT MADE HIM *BECOME* SUPERMAN
YOU MEAN *"LOVED,"* LANA. PAST TENSE
YOU SAID *"LOVE."*
I SAID WHAT I *MEANT*, CLARK.

WHUMP!
SODOM! DARLING!
GREAT! I GUESS THIS IS ONE OF THOSE TIMES WHEN THE POWERS GO!
SODOM!?
SWEETHEART, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
MMM, BETTER NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE

LET'S FINISH HIM, SHALL WE?
AND I'LL BUY YOU A LOVELY DINNER AT ANDRE'S.
SOUND GOOD?
SOUNDS PERFECT.
YOU, UH--
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS, LANA. YOU AND PETE--
I WAS SETTLING, CLARK.
AND BECAUSE YOU DID, YOU ASSUME LOIS SETTLED, TOO?

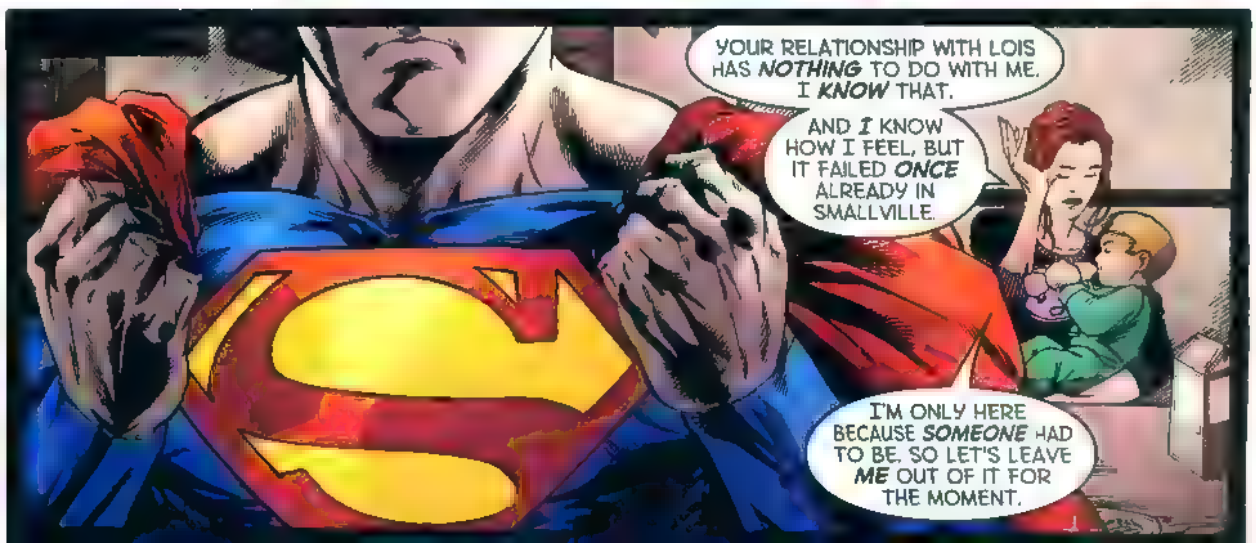
I DON'T ASSUME SHE DID, CLARK. I KNOW.
WE WERE BOTH SETTLING FOR SOMETHING LESS WHEN RIGHT IN FRONT OF US ALL ALONG--
--WAS EVERYTHING WE EVER WANTED.
KANG
SPANG
CRASH
HUUUHH

CRACK
BOOM
CLANG
I CAN ALREADY TASTE THE VEAL AT ANDRE'S.
UUUUUHHH
I WAS THINKING OF THE FOIS GRAS AND TOAST POINTS, MYSELF.

ULTIMATELY, I DECIDED IT WAS BETTER TO BE ALONE, THAN SETTLE.
MAYBE WAIT FOR SOMEONE I LOVED MORE THAN YOU--
--IF THAT'S AT ALL POSSIBLE
BUT YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT LOIS. YOU KNOW I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE HER FOR YOU
I DO KNOW
I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND IT

IT'S OBVIOUSLY A MISTAKE FOR ME TO BE HERE, WITH YOU. YOU SHOULD GATHER YOUR THINGS AND GO, LANA.
YOU THINK I'M HERE TO PICK UP ON YOU? TO CONVINCE YOU TO LEAVE YOUR WIFE DURING SOME MOMENT OF WEAKNESS?
I WAS HERE TO HELP SOMEONE I LOVE, CLARK, AND THAT'S ALL
I DON'T STALK YOU, OR DROP BY UNEXPECTEDLY FOR LUNCH HOPING, OR SURPRISE YOU IN AN OVERCOAT AND LINGERIE.
I'M PERFECTLY HAPPY WITH MY BABY AND MY TV AND MY DOG, CLARK -- EXISTING PERFECTLY FINE WITHOUT COMING BETWEEN YOU AND LOIS.
I'M HERE TO HELP A FRIEND WHEN HE NEEDS ONE AND I'M ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS HONESTLY. AND, APPARENTLY--
--HONESTY IS DIFFICULT FOR YOU.
BOOM

OOOOOH, THIS *ISN'T* MY DAY.
NO. IT'S OURS.
CHOOM


YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH LOIS HAS *NOTHING* TO DO WITH ME. I *KNOW* THAT.
AND *I* KNOW HOW I FEEL, BUT IT FAILED *ONCE* ALREADY IN SMALLVILLE.
I'M ONLY HERE BECAUSE *SOMEONE* HAD TO BE. SO LET'S LEAVE *ME* OUT OF IT FOR THE MOMENT.

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THERE FOR LOIS, CLARK. HELPING, GIVING -- RESCUING HER FROM ALL KINDS OF DANGER.
AND NOW I'M HERE BECAUSE SHE'S NOT THERE FOR YOU--
SHE'S IN ANOTHER COUNTRY.
OH. ASSIGNMENT.
OH, AND SHE DIDN'T HEAR THE NEWS ALL OVER CNN ABOUT YOU BEING WOUNDED?
HER JOB COMES BEFORE YOU?
LOIS IS ALL ABOUT LOIS, CLARK, AND YOU JUST NEVER NOTICED THAT SELFISH SIDE TO HER BECAUSE YOU'VE NEVER NEEDED HER UNTIL NOW
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU AND I BELONG TOGETHER, BUT I DON'T THINK YOU AND LOIS DO.
A WIFE IS SOMEONE WHO SHOULD BE THERE WHEN THINGS ARE GOOD -- AND BAD.
LIKE YOU WERE THERE FOR PETE?
I LEFT PETE
HE AND I DIDN'T BELONG TOGETHER FOR THE SAME REASON YOU AND LOIS DON'T.
A WIFE SHOULD WANT TO BE THERE FOR HER HUSBAND--
--NOT JUST WHEN IT'S CONVENIENT AND EASY BECAUSE YOUR HUSBAND'S A SUPERMAN--
--MOST OF THE TIME

SHOOM
HE'S TOO STRONG!
KEEP AT HIM!
AAAAH!
SINCE IT'S OBVIOUS YOU TWO CANNOT PLAY TOGETHER NICE--
CRACK
--I'M GOING TO SEPARATE YOU!
NO, STOP!! YOU'LL KILL HIM!
CHUD
YOU'LL KILL US BOTH.

GOMORRAH! DON'T LEAVE ME!
LEARN TO STAND ON YOUR OWN.
SLUMPF
SHE OBVIOUSLY WANTS A BIG, BAD SUPERMAN KILLER.
NOT SOME LOSER WHO CRIES LIKE A LITTLE GIRL WHEN THINGS GET A TAD HAIRY.
AIN'T LOVE GRAND?
YOU MARRIED SOMEONE WHO WANTED A SUPERMAN--
--THE PERFECT ALIEN, THE KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR, THE MAN WHO NEVER FAILS -- AND LUCKY FOR YOU, YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO BE THAT FOR HER.
BUT NOW YOU'RE SHOWING WEAKNESS-- FRAILTY--
--HUMANITY--
--AND SHE'S NOT HERE.

CHOOOM
WHERE DOES SHE GET OFF, LECTURING ME ABOUT LOVE?
JUST BECAUSE LOIS ISN'T HERE, SHE ONLY WANTS A SUPERMAN? NOT SOMEONE WHO'S ONLY - "A SUPERMAN MOST OF THE TIME."
THANKS, LANA. THANKS FOR COMING BY TO TAKE CARE OF ME WITH THAT LITTLE STAB IN THE HEART.
?!
OH, SWEETHEART, LOOK. THERE HE IS, ABOVE US.
YOU WERE RIGHT, DESTROYING THE CENTENNIAL PARK STATUE DID GET SUPERMAN'S ATTENTION!
EXCELLENT.
NOW WE'LL SHOW HIM WHAT TWO SUPER POWERS UNITED CAN DO AGAINST A LONE MAN.
TOGETHER, MY LOVE?
FOREVER, MY DARLING.
END

IN DEMAND

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OPENING THE CLASSIFIEDs

"Grant Morrison. The JLA. A first issue. Worked the last time!" — Mike Carlin, Senior Group Editor, DCU

This Month's Cover by...
ARTHUR ADAMS
COLOR BY GUY MAJOR

Next Month in... Action Comics #820

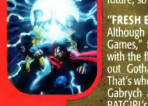
The return of Silver Banshee! Meanwhile, Superman and Jack Ryder pay their respects to the photographer caught in the crossfire of the superalien campaign in issue 817. By Chuck Austen and guest artist Carlos D'Anda.

JLA: CLASSIFIED #1 (November, 2004)

Any and all eras of the Justice League of America's illustrious career are an open book in this new ongoing series, which kicks off in spectacular fashion with **Grant Morrison**'s return to the JLA! SUPERMAN/BATMAN artists **Ed McGuinness** and **Dexter Vines** join Grant for what's sure to be a three-issue classic (and one with ramifications for Grant's next big project!), while other comics greats are lining up for their shot at the World's Greatest Super-Heroes. Be on the lookout for future creative announcements here and at dccomics.com!

The Hot List THIS WEEK

ACTION COMICS #819



Introducing Sodom & Gomorrah, a new husband-and-wife supervillain team prepared to give Superman a sound beating! Plus, some startling new developments in Clark's relationship with Lana Lang.

BLOODHOUND #3

The hunt for the superpowered serial killer continues as Clevenger reveals the unique gift that's made him invaluable to the F.B.I., but will his equally powerful gift for causing trouble keep the investigation from finding its target in time?

GOTHAM CENTRAL #23

Get the real-life perspective on "War Games!" Writer Greg Rucka (ACTION COMICS, WONDER WOMAN) returns as the bloody gang war engulfing Gotham gets too big for the men and women of the G.C.P.D to handle alone!

AMERIKAN IDOLS

JLA fans truly have a lot to be thankful for this fall – in addition to the debut of JLA: CLASSIFIED, renowned JLA/AVENGERS writer Kurt Busiek, JLA artists Ron Garney and Dan Green, and the Crime Syndicate of Amerika will be on hand for an eight-issue arc starting in October's JLA #107! Word has it the Syndicate has a legitimate axe to grind, and that the repercussions will lay the groundwork for major developments in the JLA's future, so miss it not!

"FRESH BLOOD" FOR BAT-BOOKS

Although fans will still be reeling from "War Games," the Bat-office advises everyone to go with the flow of "fresh blood" coursing throughout Gotham and its environs this November. That's when DETECTIVE COMICS writer Andersen Gabrych and GEN[13] artist Ale Garza debut as BATGIRLS new creative team with issue #58 and instantly put our heroine in an "unwinnable" situation with Robin! Andersen and Ale join forces with ROBIN's Bill Willingham and Damion Scott for "Fresh Blood," an aptly named crossover that spills across ROBIN #132, BATGIRL #58, ROBIN #133 and BATGIRL #59.

We also hear that BATMAN scribe Judd Winick started seeing red shortly after "War Games," so he's making sure the color has a profound impact on the Dark Knight's life. With issue #634, Judd welcomes artist Doug Mahnke (JUSTICE LEAGUE ELITE) to the series, and pits Batman against new criminal chieftains and a face from the past – or rather, a hidden face from the past. Trust us, you won't be able to face yourself if you miss the return of the Red Hood!

WORLD'S GREATEST SUPER-HEROES

There's obviously no comparison between DC's characters and the real-life heroes serving in the military. But when we received the photo below, we couldn't resist the chance to show a real-life crossover, as members of Golf Battery ADA – a National Guard Unit out of Marseilles, IL, who've been in Iraq protecting convoys since March – enjoy some fine reading material. We at DC want to express our sincere gratitude to (from left to right) Staff Sergeant Jeremy Gaughan, Sergeant John Stokes, Specialist JT Huey, Specialist Matthew Margis, and, on the gun, Specialist Louis Haberkorn, for doing their jobs so that we're able to do ours. Stay safe, gentlemen, and come home soon.

– your 1700

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Why can't we have two monthly Green Lantern titles? GL - Hal Jordan and GL Corps - Kyle Rayner! -jxsi